



BETHUNE-COOKMAN UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1904 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune

Edison O. Jackson, Ed.D., President

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

October 11, 2015

To: Instructional Quality Commission
c/o Thomas Adams, Executive Director
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Edits to the Draft Narrative concerning India and the Hindu faith

It is with deep concern that I address the shortcomings of the draft narrative concerning India and Hinduism for California textbooks. The most recent draft narrative has improved some minor issues over previous versions but it has yet to accurately portray the history of India and the Hindu faith in a way that is accurate. It has failed completely with regard to important topics such as caste, the "Aryan Invasion" theory, and the description of Hindu beliefs. In order to correct this unhappy situation, **I am urging The Instructional Quality Commission to review and adopt the Uberoi Foundation Institute for Curriculum Advancement edits that have been presented.** I am a scholar of Religion and I have academic expertise in the history of India and of the Hindu religion, and I find all the requested edits to be scholastically sound and in keeping with the most current research.

The failure of the Commission to consider adopting these edits in their entirety is troubling in light of the care and collaboration that took place with revising Christian, Jewish, and Muslim materials. During the development of the Framework document, the Christians, Muslims and Jews were closely involved with the process and now have their religions portrayed exactly as they requested. Nearly every requested edit from the Muslim and Jewish communities was accepted. Hindus, however, only recently engaged in the process, have had many of their requested edits rejected. As a result, of all the presentations of religion in the narrative, Hinduism is the only one put in a negative light. This is not only prejudicial towards Americans of Indian descent, it is short-sighted. International business and commercial exchange with India will only grow in the future and American students need an **accurate** cultural understanding of that part of the world. As a university professor, I am acutely aware that prejudice acquired at an early age is very difficult to erase even in students majoring in International Business.

It is my earnest hope that the Instructional Quality Commission will now review and adopt these carefully considered edits proposed by the Uberoi Foundation. It will make a difference in global understanding that will last for years to come.

Sincerely,

Alice L. Wood, Ph.D.

Chair of the Department of Religion, Philosophy, and Humanities

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